Group 4: Competitive Analysis

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Summary

When doing our competitive analysis, we took into consideration all of the things each competitor website did similar yet different from each other. We looked at their navigation systems, the hierarchy of their home pages, location of contact information, and whether or not they had links to blogs or social media. Design choices were also analyzed.

We think simple and clean, but friendly layouts are working well for the competitors websites but think they are not inviting enough or perhaps too clinical looking. We think we can improve their ideas for responsive layouts.

Competitors Evaluated

5 competitors and their URLs:

1.) Wyoga Lake Vet | http://wyogavet.com/
  Chosen via Leigh's recommendation

2.) Stow Kent Animal Hospital | http://www.wetreatpets.com/
  Chosen via client's recommendation

3.) Memorial Animal Hospital | http://www.memorialanimalhospital.com/
  Chosen via client's recommendation

4.) Buckeye Veterinary Clinic | http://www.buckeyevetclinic.com/
  Chosen via client's recommendation

5.) Twin Lakes Veterinary Hospital | http://www.twinlakesvethospital.com/
  Chosen via client's recommendation

Navigation and Labeling

Common labels (terms) used to navigate the sites
- Home
- Contact Us
- Search
- Services
- About Us
- Online Store
- Blog

Common navigation designs used to navigate and different screen sizes (drop down menus, audience-based navigation, vertical side navigation, call to action buttons, etc.)
- Top Navigation with drop down menus
- Social Media / Blog
- Request Appointment
- Contact / Address information at top of page as well as bottom
- Search bar close to top

Content and Features

What features and types of functionality do competitors offer their users?
- Pet Portal (ability to make appointments online)
- Blog
- Social Media interaction
- Information on New Users / Patients (forms, payment options, what to expect)
- Ability to "meet" staff members by reading bios

What types of content is available on the sites?
Each site has variable content, but a few aspects are pretty consistent throughout. The following items are relatively consistent on each competitor page:
- Contact information / Phone
- Email
- Request Appointment
- Staff information
- Services
- Pet Portal (ability to contact staff, see pet information)

What content is missing on the sites that would be helpful?
- Perhaps pricing for services

Voice and Tone

The common "voice" of the competitors are friendly, serious, and helpful.

Most of the websites are generic, no exciting design choices are apparent, and they are trying to appear friendly and open so their potential clients want to reach out. Clients will still understand that they are professional. Most use sans-serif fonts throughout the page with the occasional slab-serif. A couple of the sites are using a color palette of cool colors with blues and purples, the others are more warm-neutral with reds and browns.

Design Aesthetics and Layout

What are common design choices across the sites (colors, typography, layout)
  Common color choices are cool colors, a calm blue, purple, gray, etc. 2 out of 5 used warm-neutral colors with reds and browns. Typography is mostly sans serif body content and sometimes a slab serif for headings. Perhaps a san serif was chosen to for legibility purposes as well as a modern look and feel. Most use type for only descriptions and links, Wyoga uses type in various levels with pull quotes, large headings, subheads, and captions. The smaller breakpoint has really large font sizes.

*How does the design contribute to the usability of the site on various devices?*
  The websites are mostly responsive, with the exception of Twin Lakes. They have multiple breakpoints but the changes are simple and sometimes ruin the hierarchy. They appear to have started with the large sizes and worked down. When sites are sized down to mobile, there was not a lot of consideration regarding type size. The type remains large and there is not a lot of hierarchy.

*Which design pieces (patterns) could be utilized on our website?*
  We think we should take the most design inspiration from Wyoga's site. We could use a large home page slide show, simple floating navigation, google maps iframe with all contact info in one place, background patterns, and flexible images in circles.

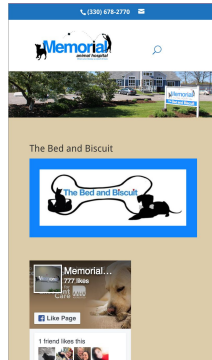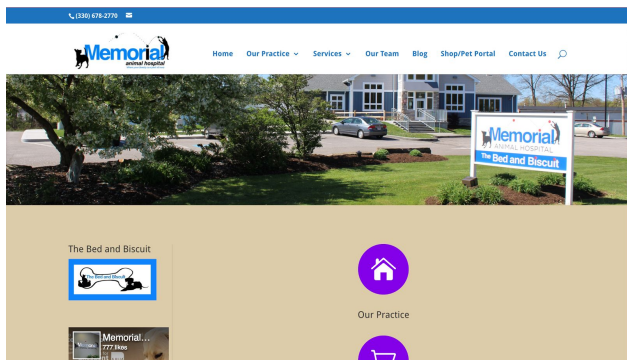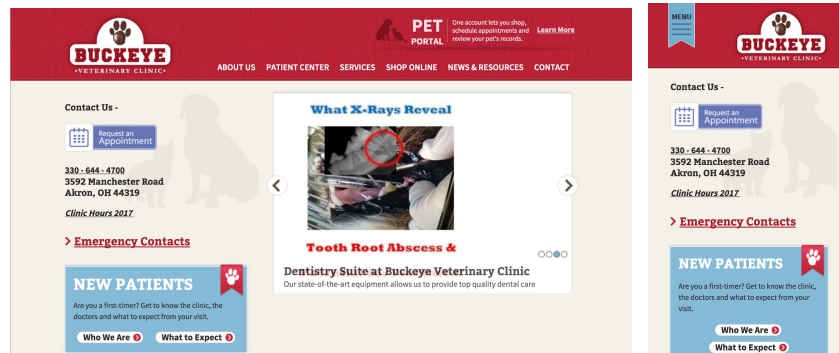*Show side-by-side screenshots of each website evaluated.*
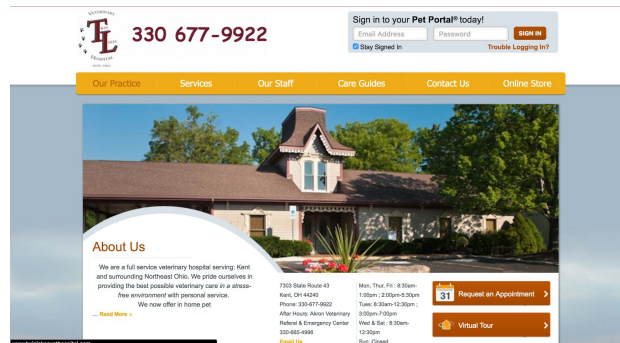
Wyoga:
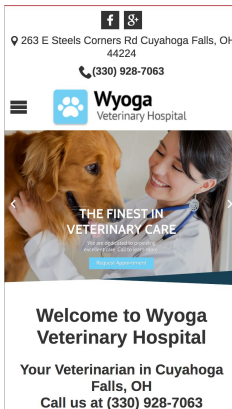
Stow Kent:
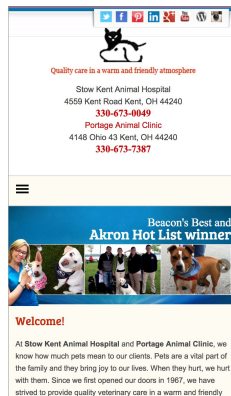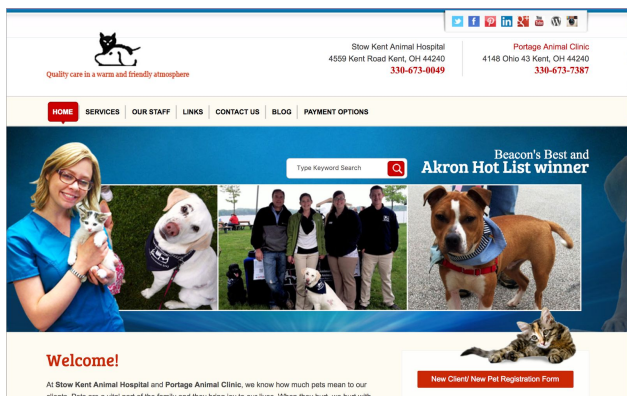
Memorial:

Buckeye:

Twin Lakes:

Recommendations and Strategy

Based on the findings above, what top recommendations do you have for your client's website, based on the top goals that they've shared already.

Based on our competitive analysis and observing the content and architecture of their sites, we recommend a simple, straight-forward top navigation bar, which floats when scrolling. All information needs to be prioritized based on need of the consumer and displayed accordingly in an organized fashion. We plan to categorize information based on user needs and allowing for a responsive design to allow for flexible use on different screen sizes. Text hierarchy should correlate with informational needs and user priority. Color choices will be based not only on existing branding, but on integrating friendliness and giving new users a welcoming feel.